ADVERTISEMENT

The Telegraph online

Monday, 01 September 2025

A detailed lowdown on how OMR impacted government school jobs and the SSC scam

Terminated school staff have asked the commission to publish the OMR sheets of their tests, SSC is seeking legal opinion on whether it can do that

Monalisa Chaudhuri, Subhankar Chowdhury | Published 13.04.25, 05:32 AM

A protester takes a break along Mayo road on Saturday afternoon

Picture by Bishwarup Dutta

The Supreme Court has invalidated 25,753 teaching and non-teaching jobs in Bengal because it couldn't reliably distinguish between legitimate appointments and those obtained through manipulation. This sweeping decision came despite the School Service Commission (SSC)'s attempts to identify "tainted" appointments.

A distinction that came up following years of the CBI probe and was accepted by the SSC failed to satisfy the apex court. The protesting school staff believe such a distinction can still be made and want to appeal to the top court to review its order.

For that, they have asked the commission to publish the OMR sheets of their tests. The SSC is seeking legal opinion on whether it can do that.

But what exactly is an OMR sheet? If it is there, then why the difficulty in identifying the "tainted" appointments from those that are not?

The Telegraph tries to find the answers:

What are OMR sheets?

Optical Mark Recognition sheets are forms with checkboxes used for multiple-choice questions in large-scale exams. These machine-readable sheets allow for

Missing evidence problem

The original physical OMR sheets were destroyed by the SSC on July 22, 2019, citing Rule 21 of the Classes IX-X and XI-XII Rules. However, the Supreme Court noted this rule applied only to Assistant Teachers' positions, not to the non-teaching Group C and D posts that were also affected. Crucially, the commission failed to maintain electronic "mirror copies" (scanned images) of the OMR sheets in their records.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

Senior citizen falls from roof of home on Moore Aven...

Schools raise alarm over rise in bullying and link sur...

Rider held with bike 'stolen' in Odisha

Rare heart surgery for two-year-old Malda boy,...

Bypass potholes return weeks after repair,...

in their records.

What's a "mirror copy"?

The scanned image of the physical OMR sheet. They are in the SSC's possession.

Data recovery efforts

The CBI gave the "mirror image" to the SSC after receiving them from three hard disks they seized from the office of Pankaj Bansal, a former employee of M/s. NYSA, the company hired to tabulate results. These disks contained data from approximately 22 lakh applicants. The data's integrity was verified by matching hash values with files from Data Scantech Solutions, a sub-contractor that M/s NYSA had used without formal SSC approval.

Why the court rejected partial validation

While the SSC claimed in February that they had identified 5,303 tainted candidates based on the recovered mirror images, the Supreme Court remained unconvinced. The court couldn't rely solely on recovered data without the commission's own maintained records to verify it. Additionally, the invalidation wasn't based only on OMR manipulation but also on numerous other irregularities:

- Lower-ranked candidates receiving preference over higher-ranked ones
- Candidates from outside the shortlist being appointed
- People not recommended by the SSC receiving positions

Current demands from affected staff

The protesting school staff are requesting that the SSC publish the mirror images of all 22 lakh candidates' OMR sheets, along with the list of those identified as tainted and untainted. They hope this transparency might provide grounds for a review of the court's decision. The SSC is currently seeking legal advice on whether this is possible.

RELATED TOPICS

OMR Sheet | SSC Scam | School Service Commission (SSC) | Government Schoolteachers

Follow us on:

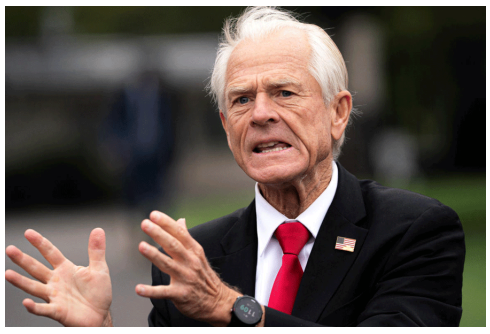
India was the economic alternative to China. US President Donal...

A lurch in policy has shaken the India-US economic alliance against China, leaving India little choice but to consider reversing its own strategy

SC rejects PIL against rollout of E-20 petrol; govt says 'benefits sugarcane...

Foreign minister Jaishankar absent, PM Modi takes bold steps with Xi Jinping's...

‘ GDP numbers for Apr-Jun 25 have l... ’



‘Brahmins profiteering at expense of Indian people’: Peter Navarro in latest rant

Earthquake in Afghanistan kills at least 610, injures 1,300; rescue efforts underway

Sensex and Nifty rebound in early trade as India’s Q1 GDP grows stronger-than-expected

Congress slams PM Modi over Xi Jinping talks, calls silence on China-Pakistan ties...

READ MORE

attacks

more rain in store

News

Opinion

States

Nation

World

Entertainment

Business

Sports

Science & Tech

Health

More

Gallery

Video

Horse Racing

Culture

My Kolkata

News

Places

People

Lifestyle

Events

Food

Try This

Edugraph

News

Career

Campus

18 Under 18

Company

About

Contact Us

Terms of Use

Privacy Policy

Download the latest Telegraph app

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Follow us on

Websites আনন্দবাজার.com

Copyright © 2025 The Telegraph. All rights reserved.